

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4924

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 5704/1

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, GR

SUBJECT: GREECE, NATO, AND THE US - SOME REFLECTIONS

EXDIS

IN EVALUATION THE GREEK GOVERNMENT'S DECREE TO
LEAVE NATO, I BELIEVE IT IS USEFUL TO BEAR IN MIND A
NUMBER OF ESSENTIAL FACTS:

1. THE GOG AND THE GREEK PEOPLE ARE HIGHLY FRUSTRATED
BECAUSE OF THEIR INABILITY TO COME TO THE AID OF THEIR
FELLOW GREEKS IN CYPRUS. THE CONFLICT WITH TURKEY IS
AGGRAVATED BY THE FACT ITS HISTORIC ADVERSARY TURKEY IS
INVOLVED. THE COUNTRY IS STILL VIVIDLY ASSOCIATED WITH
FOUR CENTURIES OF OCCUPATION AND THEIR OWN WAR OF
INDEPENDENCE.
2. DURING THE CRISIS, IT HAS FELT LET DOWN BY ITS NATO
ALLIES WHICH IT FELT COULD HAVE COMPLETED TURKEY
TO OBSERVE ITS CEASE-FIRE.
3. ON THE OTHER HAND, I BELIEVE WHEN THE DUST SETTLES
THE BASIC ELEMENTS TYING GREECE TO THE UNITED STATES AND
ITS NATO ALLIES WILL BE GIVEN THEIR APPROPRIATE WEIGHT.
THEY ARE A SMALL COUNTRY SURROUNDED BY HOSTILE AND
POTENTIALLY HOSTILE FORCES. GEOGRAPHICALLY, THEY CLEARLY
NEED FRIENDS. WITH DEMOCRACY IN THE PROCESS OF BEING

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RESTORED, MANY FRIENDS WILL BE APPARENT.

4. OUR TRADITIONALLY CLOSE TIES WITH THIS COUNTRY, AND PARTICULARLY ITS PEOPLE, WILL PROVE TO BE STRONG AND I BELIEVE CAN BE DECISIVE. THEY KNOW THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE FRIENDLY AND MEAN WELL. THE GREEKS WHO ARE KEYED INTO REALITIES, AND OTHERS MUST OR WILL REALIZE THE MOST DIFFICULT DILEMMA WHICH HAS FACED OUR GOVERNMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRISIS - I.E. THE OVERRIDING NECESSAITY OF SEEKING TO BRING OUR IMPORTANT ALLIES TOGETHER WITHOUT IRREPARABLE DAMAGE IN OUR OR NATO'S RELATIONS WITH EITHER ONE IN THE IMPERATIVE INTEREST OF WESTERN SECURITY IN THE EASTERN MEDITERREAN.

5. THEIR DECISION TO REMAIN IN THE ALLIANCE, FRENCH STYLE, DOES UNDERLINE THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SECURITY PROTECTION WHICH THE ALLIANCE PROVIDES THEM AGAINST THE POTENTIAL DANGERS FROM THE WARSAW PACT AREA. I DO NOT BELIEVE CARAMANLIS WANTS TO ACT HASTILY WITH REGARD TO UNRAVELLING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN NATO MILITARY STRUCTURE WHERE BASIC MILITARY ELEMENTS ARE INVLED SUCH AS NAMFI, OUR NATO USE OF SOUDA BAY, ETC. CLEARLY, HOWEVER, THE PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF GREECE'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM NATO, AND THE SPEED WITH WHICH THE GREEK GOVERNMENT PROCEEDS TO DISENGAGE FROM THE MILITARY PORTIONS OF THE ALLIANCE, WILL DEPEND UPON EVENTS IN CYPRUS AND IN ANKARA OVER WHICH CARAMANLIS AND HIS PRO-WESTERN COLLEAGUES HAVE LITTLE OR NO CONTROL. THE US AND NATO HAVE BECOME, ALMOST INEVITABLY, THE SCAPEGOATS FOR GREEK FRUSTRATION OVER THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. THE SOONER WE CAN MANUFACTURE A SETTLEMENT THAT MEETS GREEK AS WELL AS TURKISH MINIMUM OBJECTIVES, AND WHICH IS NOT INJURIOUS TO GREEK SELF-RESPECT, THE SOONER WE CAN BEGIN TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF GREECE'S DECISION TO LOOSEN ITS MILITARY COOPERATION WITH NATO. THAT DECISION IS THUS FAR RHETORICAL BUT IT CANNOT REMAIN SO FOR LONG IN THE ABSENCE OF US ACTION WHICH THE GREEKS WILL INTERPRET AS RESPONSIVE TO THEIR CONCERN ABOUT CONTINUED TURKISH MILITARY ADVANCES ON CYPRUS AND WHAT THEY REGARD AS A BLUNT AND UNHEEDING TURKISH DIPLOMATIC POSTURE.

6. IN THE SHORT TERM WE MUST ACT PROMPTLY ALONG THE
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FOLLOWING LINES:
TASCA

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 5704/2

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS TAGS: PFOR, NATO, GR

SUBJECT: GREECE, NATO, AND THE US- SOME REFLECTIONS

EXDIS

(A) DEMONSTRATE THAT WE ARE MINDFUL OF GREECE'S IMPORTANCE TO THE US AND THE WESTERN ALLIANCE AND THAT WE HAVE NOT "CHOSEN TURKEY OVER GREECE". OUR DESIRE TO AVOID PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE TURKS IS LOGICAL IN VIEW OF OUR INTENTION TO RETAIN DIPLOMATIC LEVERAGE IN ANKARA, BUT OUR EVEN-HANDED PUBLIC POSTURE HAS COST US LEVERAGE IN ATHENS AND HAS CONTRIBUTED TO GREECE'S PSYCHOLOGICAL ESTRANGEMENT. I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT A TRIP BY THE SECRETARY TO ANKARA AND ATHENS IS INDISPENSABLE TO REVERSE THE DISTURBING TRENDS WE ARE WITNESSING IN GREECE.

B) DEMONSTRATE ALSO THAT WE UNDERSTAND CARAMANLIS' DOMESTIC AND PERSONAL PROBLEMS: THAT WE REGARD HIM AS A FRIEND AND WANT HIM TO SUCCEED IN RESTORING STRONG AND EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT. HERE AGAIN A VISIT BY THE SECRETARY WOULD DO MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE SHORT TERM. EVENTUALLY, AND DEPENDING ON FUTUER DEVELOPMENTS, WE SHOULD CONSIDER A VISIT BY CARAMANLIS TO THE U.S. IN THIS CONNECTION I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT A MAVROS VISIT TO WASHINGTON CAN ACCOMPLISH MUCH. MAVROS IS THE LEAST ARTICULATE AND MOST POLITICALLY THREATENED OF THE PRESENT GREEK LEADERS AND THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS REQUIRES A CLEARER CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION

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THAN HE CAN PROVIDE.

7) IN THE LONGER TERM WE SHOULD CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

A) ONCE GREEK RELATIONS WITH TURKEY HAVE QUIETED DOWN, AND I MUST FRANKLY SAY THAT MANY GREEKS FEAR TURKISH AIMS AGAINST GREECE ARE NOT LIMITED TO CYPRUS BUT OTHER OBJECTIVES SUCH AS THE EASTERN GREEK ISLANDS OFF THE TURKISH COAST, THRACE, ETC, WE SHOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE IN THE GREEK PROGRAM TO MODERNIZE THEIR ARMED FORCES. IN THIS REGARD, THE MILITARY FROM THE LOWEST TO THE HIGHEST RANKS STILL PREFER OUR EQUIPMENT OVER THAT OF OUR ALLIES ALTHOUGH SOMETIMES DELIVERY SCHEDULES AND ECONOMICS HAVE FORCED THEM OTHERWISE.

B) SOME ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING CREDIT TO CARRY THEM OVER THE DIFFICULT BALANCE OF PAYMENTS POSITION THEY ARE FACING COULD OF COURSE ALSO HELP TO UNDERLINE OUR BASIC INTEREST IN A FRIENDLY AND STRONG GREECE.

C) WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SIGNIFICANT MILITARY MODERNIZATION, WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE OUR NATO ALLIES SIMILARLY TO ACT ALONG THE FOREGOING LINES. SUMMIT LEVEL MEETINGS WITH CARAMANLIS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY IN ORDER AS THEY BECOME FEASIBLE. AMBASSADOR VLACHOS TOLD ME LAST EVENING THAT GREECE WAS DEEPLY OFFENDED THAT SECURITY GENERAL LUNS HAD REFUSED TO POSTPONE HIS VACATION SUFFICIENTLY TO BE PRESENT AT THE NAC MEETINGS TO DEAL WITH THE GREEK-TURKISH CRISIS. STEPS NEED TO BE TAKEN TO REPAIR THIS FEELING OF WOUNDED PHILOTIMO.

D) FORWARD MOVEMENT IN GREEK ASSOCIATION WITH THE COMMON MARKET, INCLUDING THE RENEWAL OF THE REMAINING TRanches OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SUSPENDED AFTER THE 1967 COUP WOULD OF COURSE BE USEFUL.

8. THE FOREGOING ARE SUGGESTIVE. FOR THE PRESENT, WE SHOULD MAKE CLEAR IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP AND ATTACHMENT TO GREECE. WHEN THE GOG GETS AROUND TO SORTING OUT ITS POLICIES WE SHALL HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE CLEAR TO THE GREEKS THE TRULY RECIPROCAL SECURITY
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INTEREST WE HAVE IN THE AVAILABILITY OF FACILITIES TO OUR ARMED FORCES IN GREECE.

9. ONE WORD OF CAUTION IN CLOSING THIS MESSAGE. THE LEFT, NOTABLY ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, WILL, OF COURSE, DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO EXACERBATE GREECE'S RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. AND THE WEST. WE SHOULD, THEREFORE, EXPECT A

MAJOR EFFORT OF THESE FORCES IN KEY GREEK SECTORS AGAINST
THE U.S. POSITION IN GREECE. THEY WILL HAVE THEIR SUCCESSES.
BUT I BELIEVE THAT WITH CARAMANLIS AT THE HELM AND
OTHER INTELLIGENT AND WESTERN ORIENTED LEADERS SUCH AS
MAVRO, PESMAZOGLU, ETC. IF WE ACT DECISIVELY AND IN DEPTH
AND BREADTH, OUR POSITION IN GREECE CAN BE MAINTAINED IN
ITS ESSENTIAL ASPECTS.

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